



## Anchors Aweigh

USA, 1945, Colour  
Certificate U, 140 mins

### Cast

Joseph Brady	Gene Kelly
Clarence Doolittle	Frank Sinatra
Susan Abbott	Kathryn Grayson
Jose Iturbi	Himself
Donald Martin	Dean Stockwell
Girl from Brooklyn	Pamela Britton
Carlos	Carlos Ramirez
Police Captain	Edgar Kennedy
Little Girl Beggar	Sharon McManus

Director	George Sidney
Producer	Joe Pasternak
Script	Isobel Lennart Natalie Martin
Cinematography	Charles Boyle Robert Planck
Film Editing	Adrienne Fazan
Music	George Stoll Jule Styne
Choreographer	Stanley Donen

Tonight's film is our tribute to the memory of Gene Kelly, who died earlier this year. Not, perhaps, among his three best films, which must be, I suppose, *On The Town*, *An American in Paris* and *Singin' in the Rain*; *Anchors Aweigh* is, nevertheless, not so far behind.

Kelly, who was born in 1912, had run a dance school in Pittsburgh with his brother, Fred, before deciding to try his luck on Broadway. His big break came in *Pal Joey*, when he was spotted by David O. Selznick and taken off to Hollywood. Once there, he quickly moved on to MGM on the recommendation of Arthur Freed, a powerful influence in the creation of the modern musical and in the pre-eminence of MGM in that genre. As a producer, Freed surrounded himself with an impressive team of

talented, innovative, ambitious artists. This team included Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen.

Kelly and Donen both shared a background in modern dance and the Broadway stage and their association dated back to 1940 and *Pal Joey*. Their collaboration in the late Forties and early Fifties brought a burst of vitality to the Hollywood musical. Their individual flair and eagerness to experiment, so apparent then, continued to sustain them both throughout their careers and long after their partnership ended.

Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen combined on the musical numbers of *Anchors Aweigh* and the film also brought together Kelly and Frank Sinatra for the first time. They are sailors on shore leave in Los Angeles who visit Hollywood. Kelly is a bit bumptious and a street-wise know-all, whereas Sinatra is shy and retiring and constantly pursued by women anxious to mother him. The two sailors, anxious to score with women, finish up with the likes of Dean Stockwell as a youngster with ambitions to join the Navy. They also meet up with Tom and Jerry, which enabled Kelly to experiment for the first time with live action and animation. The resulting dance sequence involving Kelly with Jerry the mouse is one of the most memorable moments of the film.



Intensely patriotic (the Navy is marvellous) and sentimental (kids are wonderful), the big attractions of *Anchors Aweigh* are Kelly's hoofing and the tunes of Jule Styne and Sammy Kahn. This is solid musical fare from MGM, the home of the musical. The production numbers are lively, the songs are easy to listen to and the colour - hopefully, we shall have a good print - outstanding.



#### EVEN BIGGER SCREEN STEAM!

For several years now, WNCC and Woking Borough Council have collaborated to bring to Woking a week-end of films devoted to the subject of steam railways. This has always been a very popular event, bringing railway enthusiasts from miles (or should that be sidings?) around together to enjoy archive footage in both documentary and dramatic styles.

One of the chief movers behind the Big Screen Steam weekends has been John Huntley, who has been engaged to present 'Steam on the Screen', a programme of 35mm films from his archive, at the Odeon Leicester Square on Sunday 3 November. Donald MacKenzie will be providing live musical accompaniment at the Compton Organ.

This is a Cinema 100 Special event, sponsored by the Cinema Organ Society, Silver Link, Steam Railway and The West End Extra. Tickets cost £4.00, available in advance or at the door. Doors open at 9.45 AM and the show starts at 10.15 AM.

*Anchors Aweigh*, an indicator of the shape of musicals to come, is often seen as a precursor for the better known *On The Town* of 1949. This also involves sailors, although this time on leave in New York. But *Anchors Aweigh* is not without its credits. It merited a string of Academy Award nominations, for Best Picture, Best Actor (Gene Kelly), Colour Cinematography and Song (*I Fall In Love Too Easily*), and received the 1945 Oscar for the Best Score for a Musical Picture.

Relax and enjoy this tribute to that fine performer, Gene Kelly.

NEVILLE LEDDSOME

#### MUSICAL MUSINGS

For each film we screen, the Committee members plunder their collections of CDs, cassettes and vinyl to find suitable music to play before, during the interval, and after the film. Sometimes we struggle to find something that matches the period or the mood. We have found something for each film up to and including *Il Postino*, plus a couple coming later on in the season. If any member of the Club has suitable music to accompany any of the films being screened from February 1997 onwards, please contact a member of the Committee.

### Our Next Presentation

#### The Round-Up (Szegénylegények)

This horrifying yet gripping study of ruthless, methodical political oppression demonstrated a remarkable skill of director Miklós Jancsó in fusing style and content with rigorous economy and precision. Based on historical fact, it was Jancsó's attempt to defuse the romantic concept of an eternal Magyar spirit. The vast Hungarian plain was made for the 'scope screen. *Hungary 1965/Dir Miklós Jancsó. With János Görbe, Tibor Molnár, András Kozák. 94 mins.*

· 14 November 1996

Performance Ends 10.10pm (approx.)

FROM THE COMMITTEE.

The last film we screened, *Once Were Warriors*, provoked a variety of responses from those who saw it, as you can see on the back page. One person was prompted to ask "Who chose this obscene rubbish?" The answer is that the Committee jointly considered it the most apt film that could be found among those suggested by members for inclusion in this season to explore some of the issues raised by the theme of this year's One World Week: Living on the Edge.

Some of you will be aware that Woking's New Cinema Club is a registered charity. What you may not be aware of is that one of the charitable aims of the Club is education. Over the years, the Committee has interpreted that aim in a variety of ways. The inclusion of a silent film with live or recorded musical accompaniment is one aspect of our educational role: introducing people to a form of cinema that they may not have experienced before and which is not widely accessible.

*Once Were Warriors* can be seen to have been educational in two respects. Firstly, it gave many of those who attended a rare insight into Maori culture and the difficulties of a marginalised minority group in a society which is alien and alienating to them. Secondly, it portrayed domestic violence, a fact of life for many people, whether we like it or not. Surrey has its share of women's refuges, just like any other county or city in this country, and the women living in them are in constant fear of harassment and physical violence. It's not nice, we don't like to think about it, but it's some people's everyday reality.

The Committee aims to provide a varied programme through the season, not all of which is to everybody's taste. Some films delight the majority of the audience while leaving a minority cold. That is

part of the appeal of cinema - there's a huge variety of material on offer and that's the vein we try to mine each year as we sift through the suggestions put forward by you the members for future selection.

One person commented: "It was a painful experience - but I need to open my eyes to reality for so many people on this planet - so that I can do something about it." That reaction alone would seem to vindicate the decision of your Committee to screen this film.

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YOUR HELP REQUIRED

The Club still needs help with projection of the films and someone to take on the post of Hon. Secretary to the Committee.

John Myall is our Head of Projection and has trained assistants in the past. However, none of these people is currently able to commit themselves to coming along to every screening and now John's own work means that he can't guarantee to be present for each film. Please come and talk to John at one of our screenings or phone him on 01483 771328 to discuss what's involved. It might be a lot more straightforward than you think.

The Committee needs to have someone to take notes for translation into minutes, prepare agendas and produce other paperwork as required. The present Hon. Secretary will be standing down in December, taking her final set of notes at the meeting on December 5. If you think you could take on the job, please talk to Gill Rollings (Hon. Secretary), Iain McGlashan (Chairman) or another member of the Committee. You would be welcome to attend the December meeting as an observer.

AUDIENCE REACTIONS	10	
	9	***** *****
ONCE WERE WARRIORS	8	***** *
(Screened 17 October 1996)	7	***** ***** **
	6	*****
	5	**
Average Mark: 6.6	4	*
No. of slips returned: 43	3	****
	2	*
	1	**

As Iain wrote in his notes for this film, it makes for uncomfortable viewing: the reaction sheets were liberally peppered with comments such as "too violent", "painful", "too strong". However, to others it was "moving" and "fascinating". The word used most often was "powerful". See previous page for a response to the reactions: meanwhile, here are some of the comments received.

*A shocking, powerful film. Very moving and sad.*

*Grim.*

*Fascinating insight into violent sub-culture present in society.*

*Tough stuff! Hard to watch but a good choice.*

*Left me shaking like a leaf.*

*Good acting but too much violence and bad language!*

*In all the years I have been coming there haven't been many films I have wanted to go home in the middle. This one I did. I almost couldn't bear to watch or listen any more. The acting was painfully strong.*

*So powerful - the funeral scene was very moving and showed the proud nation behind the violence.*

*A bit too harrowing to be classed as entertainment.*

*..gripping, moving and a film one could empathise with.*

*Excellent film but hard to take!*

*Didn't "enjoy" but highly appreciated brilliant film. Found it disturbing, very, very violent, but with the hope of transferring/transforming it "all inside" as in Boogie. Very powerful.*

Previous scores: Remains of the Day 8.4; The Usual Suspects 6.8.

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